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**March 24, 2011**

### **ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN, NINE STATES CRACK DOWN ON NATIONAL AUTO MARKETING FIRM OVER FALSE ADS**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today joined nine other states in reaching a settlement against a Georgia advertising corporation over its false car sales promotions around the country, in violation of the Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act.

The actions were filed in Sangamon County Circuit Court against Action Integrated Marketing Inc. and its owner Jay D. Murphree, of Georgia.

The states found AIM falsely advertised to consumers that its sales events included repossessed or governmental surplus vehicles when in reality the cars sold at these events originated from a dealership's existing inventory. AIM advertised its promotions on television and radio or in newspapers and on the Internet.

"The defendants' advertisements clearly misrepresented the terms of their sales events to consumers," Attorney General Madigan said. "An automobile purchase is a major financial commitment and entering into this transaction, consumers deserve facts not fabrications."

One of AIM's tactics involved so-called "Repo Joe" sales, where the company claimed consumers would be able to purchase repossessed vehicles at a discount. The sales, in fact, were just a marketing pitch to sell off a dealership's existing inventory.

AIM also advertised credit terms for buyers without disclosing that the availability of the credit terms was dependent on the creditworthiness of the purchaser, the down payment, the term of the contract or the rate of financing.

The states' settlement prohibits the defendants from these false advertising claims and bars Murphree and AIM from selling auto advertising promotions that include credit terms that do not disclose term limits. Illinois will receive from AIM \$13,000 of the \$150,000 settlement.

The nine other states included in the settlement are Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Washington.

Assistant Attorneys General Cassandra Karimi and Greg Grzeskiewicz are handling this case for Madigan's Consumer Fraud Bureau.

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